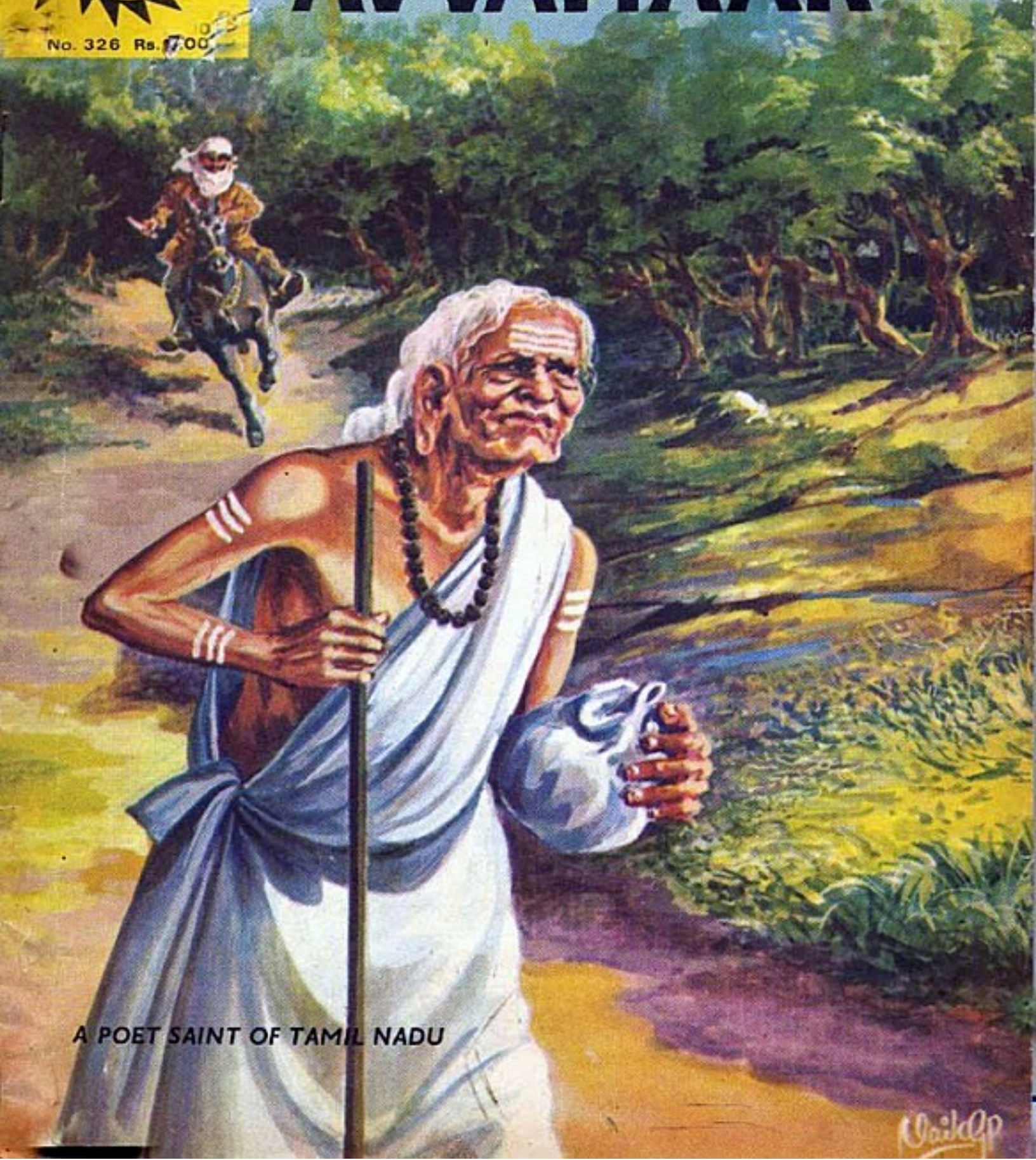




No. 326 Rs. 7.00

# ***TALES OF AVVAIYAAR***



**A POET SAINT OF TAMIL NADU**

*Ward*



## **Amar Chitra Katha**

No. 326 January 15, 1985

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Published by:

**H. G. MIRCHANDANI**  
for IBH Publishers Pvt. Ltd.,  
Mahalaxmi Chambers,  
22, Bhulabhai Desai Road,  
Bombay 400 026 and printed by him  
at IBH Printers, Marol Naka,  
Mathuradas Vissanji Road,  
Andheri (East), Bombay 400 059.

©IBH Publishers Pvt. Ltd.,  
Bombay 400 026.

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Distributors in U. S. A.  
**Admans Enterprises Inc.**  
1123 Broadway Suite 1010  
New York N.Y. 10010

Subscription: (in India only)  
Rs. 48/- for 12 issues and Rs. 96/-  
for 24 issues. (Add Rs. 5/-  
for outstation cheques).

Sole Authorised Agency for  
Subscriptions: Partha Books Division,  
Nav Prabhat Chambers,  
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## **Tales of Avvaiyaar**

Avvaiyaar, the renowned Tamil poetess, came to be revered as a saint. She had no one home and travelled where her fancy took her. This brought her into contact with all sorts of people. Poor and rich, commoner and king, were alike to her.

A story is told of the origins of Avvaiyaar. It is said that she was born of a low-caste mother and a high-caste father. The father forced the mother to abandon the child. but this story is not accepted by all.

There is also a popular belief that the cowherd boy who came to the aid of the hungry Avvaiyaar was Lord Muruga (or SUBRAHMANYA) himself come down to meet the great poetess. And, of course, it was only before this deity in disguise that Avvaiyaar acknowledged defeat.

Avvaiyaar's poems are vigorous and zestful and full of earthy common sense and wisdom. They also provide telling insights into human nature.

Because of labour unrest, we have not been able to maintain the printing and despatch schedules of Amar Chitra Katha and Tinkle from the middle of October 1984. The inconvenience caused to our subscribers and our readers is regretted.

We hope to be back on schedule in the near future.

- Publishers.


OUR NEXT RELEASE ON  
February 1, 1985

**TAPATI**




# AVVAI AND PAARI


ONE DAY, A VISITOR WAS ANNOUNCED TO THE COURT OF KING PAARI OF PARAMBU NAAD.



THE REVERED  
POET AVVAIYAAR  
IS HERE TO SEE  
YOU, SIR.




AVVAI! DEAR  
AVVAI! YOU HAVE COME  
AT LAST TO THREAD  
YOUR SWEET VERSES  
LIKE PEARLS ON THE  
BARE STRING OF  
MY LIFE!



I AM SO HAPPY  
TO SEE YOU AGAIN,  
PAARI.

BUT YOU  
LOOK TIRED.



ANY KING WOULD  
GLADLY PROVIDE  
YOU WITH A CAR-  
RIAGE. BUT, NO, YOU  
WILL INSIST ON  
WEARING OUT  
YOUR FEET.

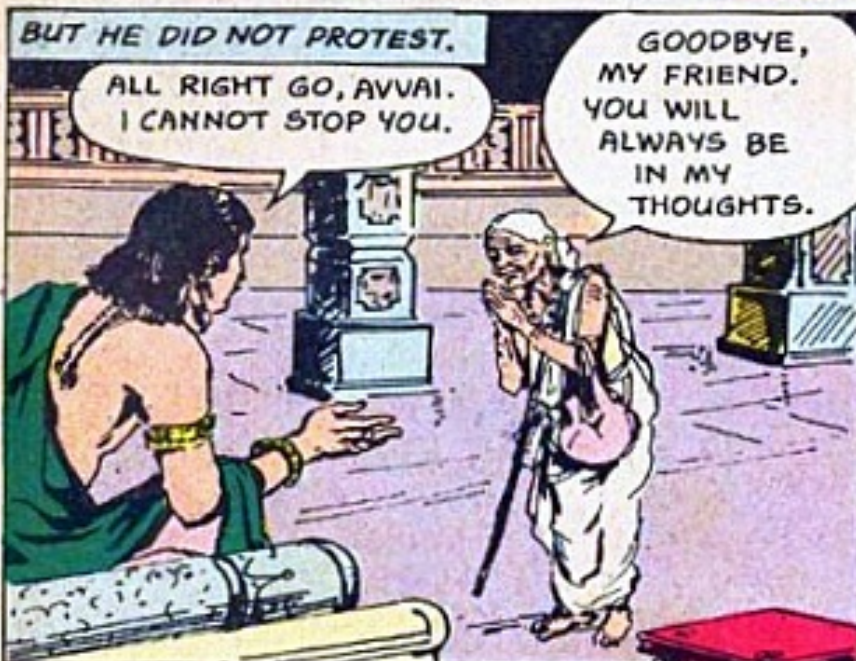
WHAT  
AM I  
TO DO?





\* A SWEET DISH MADE OF MILK AND RICE







... A FIGURE RODE TOWARDS HER...



... AND —

HAND OVER ALL  
YOU HAVE, IF YOU  
VALUE YOUR  
LIFE!

WHAT!  
A ROBBER IN  
PAARI'S  
LAND?



ALL RIGHT, HERE  
YOU ARE! BUT YOUR  
KING WILL HEAR OF  
THIS, BELIEVE ME.



WHEN THE ROBBER  
HAD RIDDEN AWAY...



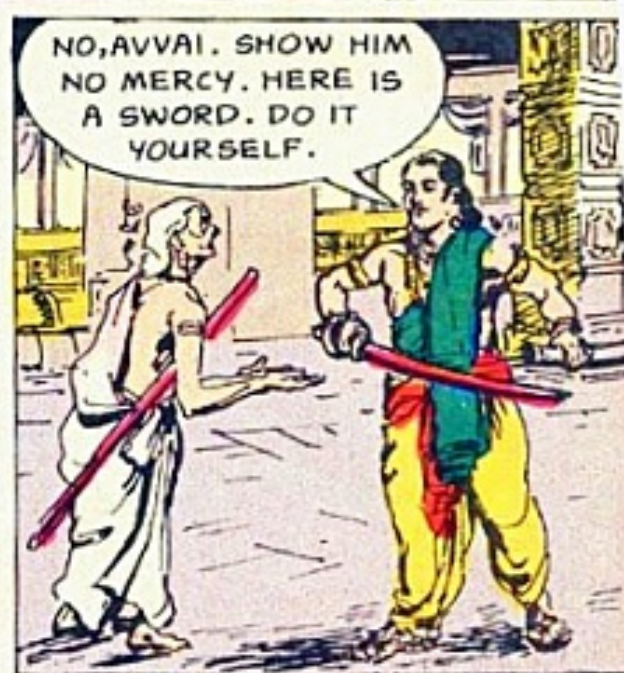
... AVVAI MADE HER WAY BACK TO  
THE PALACE.



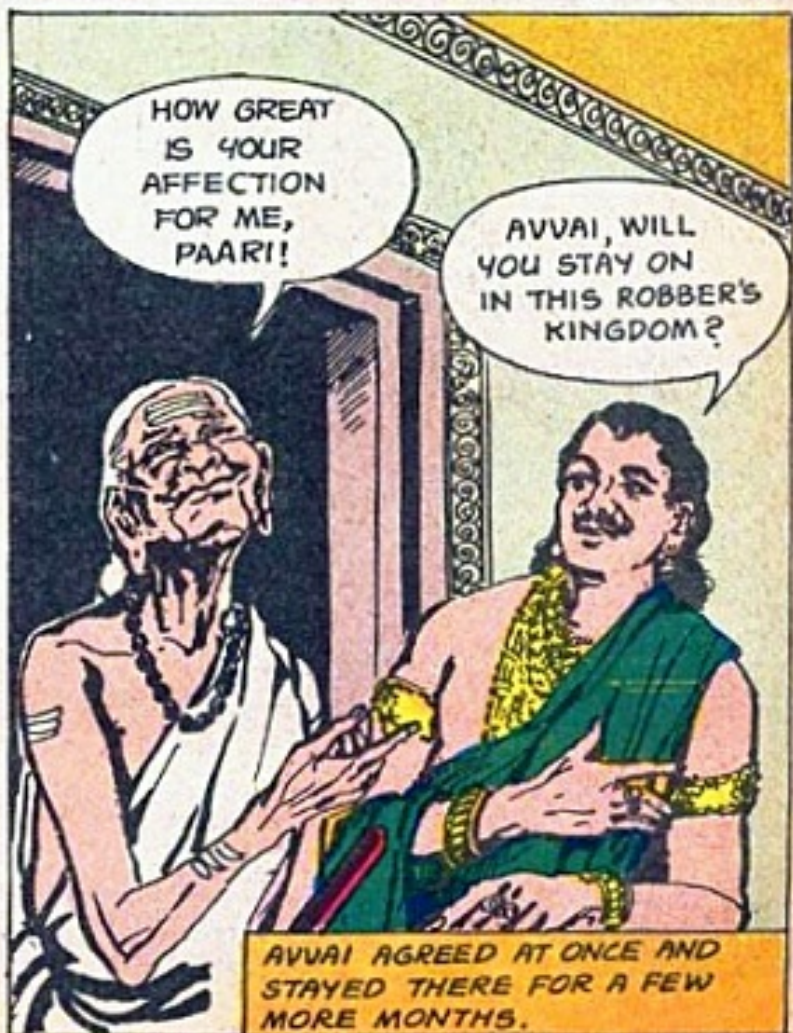






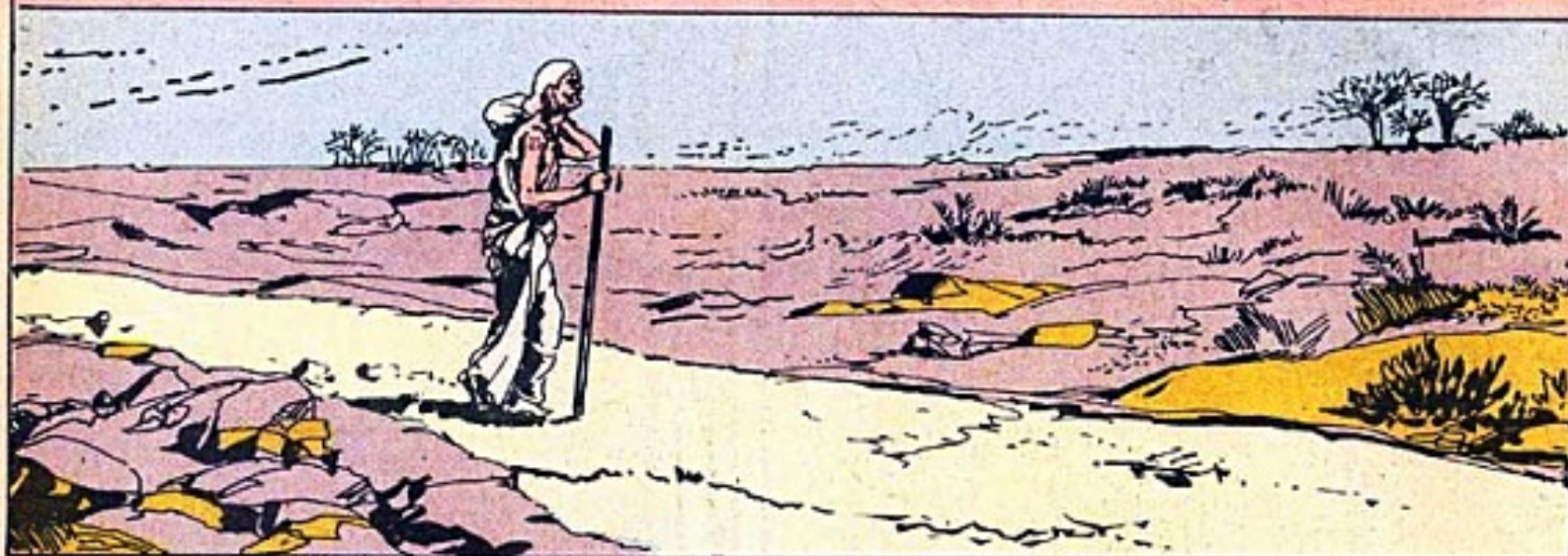








THEN, LEAVING PAARI'S KINGDOM, AVVAI CONTINUED ON HER WANDERINGS. ONE DAY, HER PATH LED HER THROUGH A VAST STRETCH OF BARREN COUNTRY.



AS SHE WALKED ON, HUNGER AND THIRST BEGAN TO TORMENT HER.

NOT A SINGLE  
FRUIT-BEARING TREE!  
NOT A STREAM OF WATER  
IN SIGHT!



SOMEHOW SHE STAGGERED ON TILL...



...AT LAST —

A JAMUN\* TREE!  
IS IT REAL? OR  
AM I SEEING  
THINGS?



AVVAI APPROACHED THE TREE AND SAT EXHAUSTED UNDER IT.

FOR THE STRENGTH  
TO SHAKE THE FRUIT  
DOWN, I WOULD  
FIRST HAVE TO EAT  
A FEW OF THEM!



\* A LUSCIOUS DARK VIOLET FRUIT



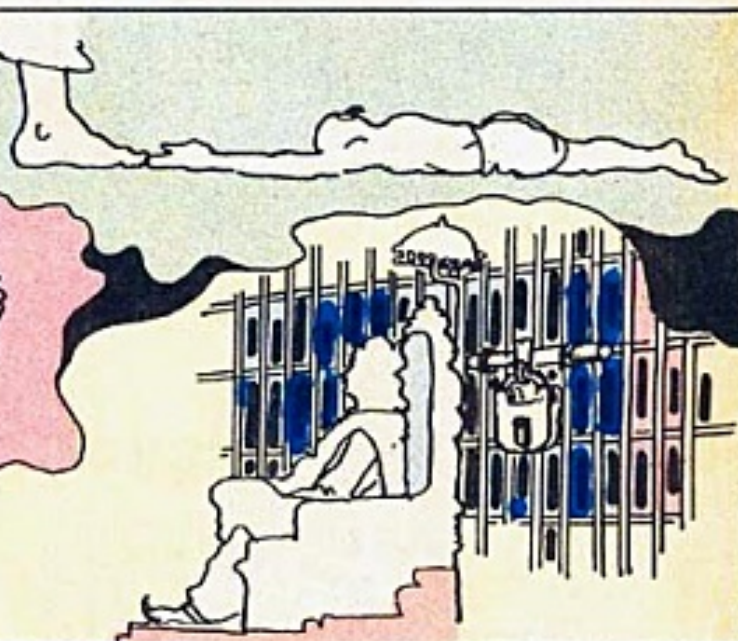
EVEN THERE, TRAPPED IN SUCH A SITUATION, AVVAI DID NOT LOSE HER SENSE OF HUMOUR.

NOW, WHEN THIS STOMACH CANNOT GET A THING TO EAT, HOW KEENLY IT HUNGERS FOR YOUR PAYASAM, PAARI!



"O MY BAG OF TROUBLES, IF I ASK YOU TO MANAGE WITHOUT FOOD FOR ONE DAY, YOU CANNOT. YET, WHEN YOU COULD HAVE TAKEN IN ENOUGH FOR DAYS TO COME, YOU DID NOT AGREE. NEVER WILL YOU UNDERSTAND MY TROUBLES. YOU ARE A DIFFICULT ONE TO LIVE WITH!"

WE BOW TO THE UNDESERVING, WE CROSS THE SEAS, WE PUT ON MANY ACTS, WE ENSLAVE PEOPLE AND RULE OVER THEM, WE SING THE PRAISES OF ALL KINDS OF MEN—ALL FOR A MEASURE OF RICE FOR THIS TYRANT.



FOR A MEASURE OF RICE AND FOR FOUR CUBITS OF CLOTH TO COVER HIS BODY, MAN MUST THINK AND THINK OF HIS EIGHTY CRORE DEVICES.

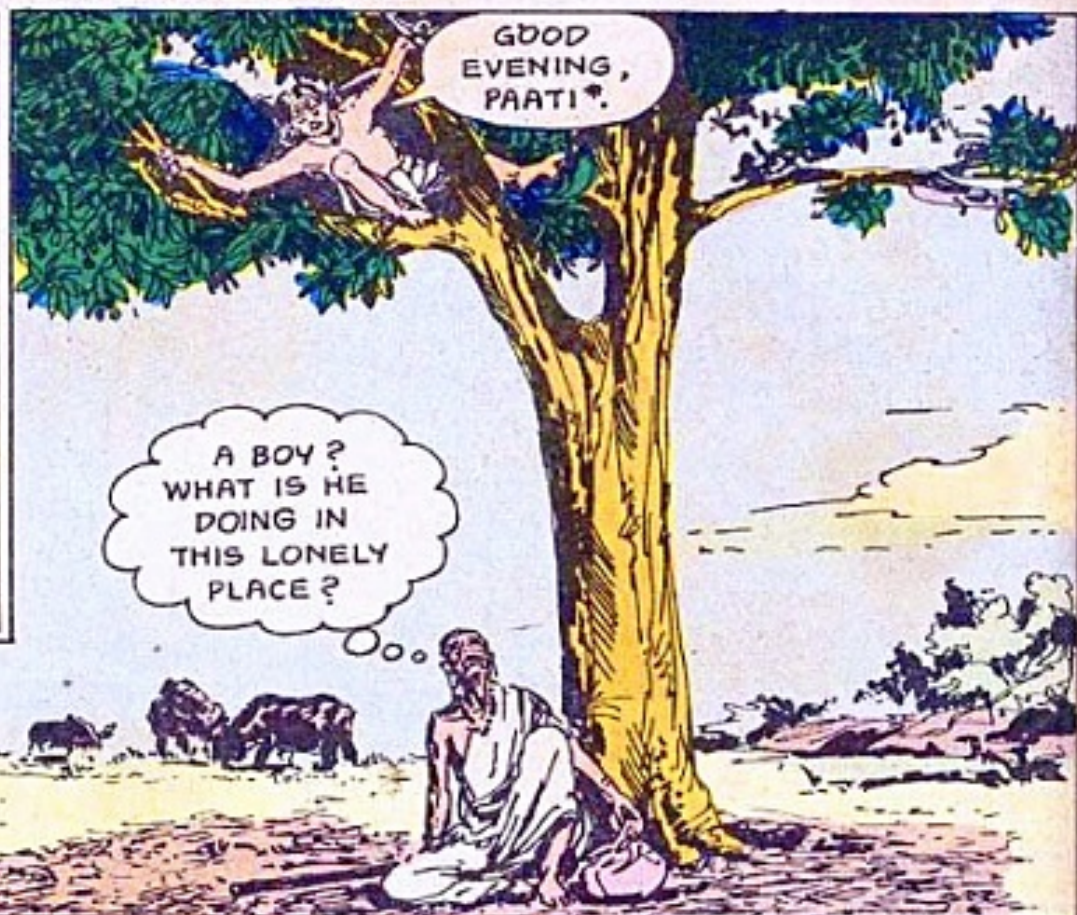


AVVAI LAUGHED AT THESE VERSES, COMPOSED ON AN EMPTY STOMACH!





THEN SHE BEGAN TO MUSE.  
SUDDENLY A VOICE BROKE  
INTO HER THOUGHTS.



GOOD  
EVENING,  
PAATI!

A BOY?  
WHAT IS HE  
DOING IN  
THIS LONELY  
PLACE?



MY CHILD,  
I AM TIRED AND  
HUNGRY. WILL  
YOU THROW ME  
SOME FRUIT?

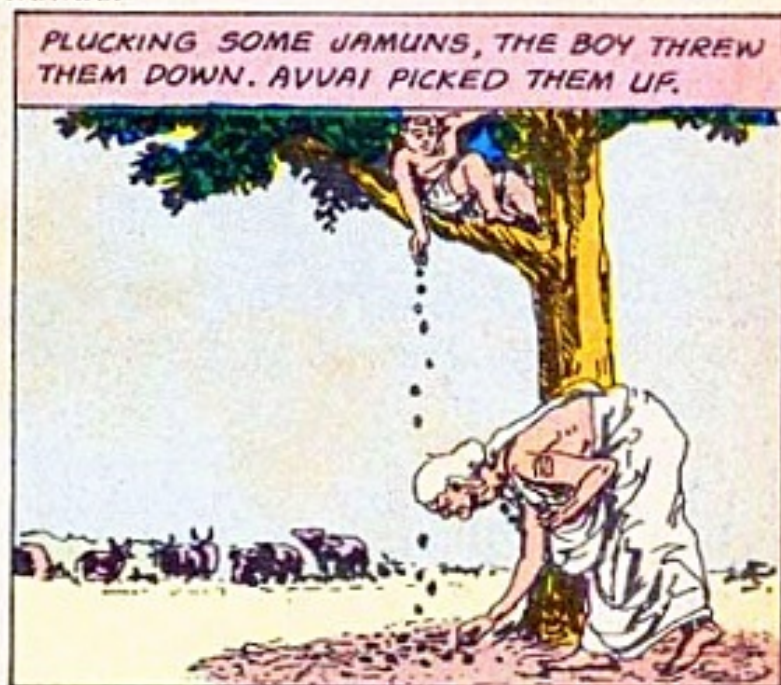


CERTAINLY,  
PAATI! DO YOU  
WANT HOT FRUIT  
OR COLD?



HOT FRUIT  
OR COLD? HE'S  
TEASING ME.  
I WILL  
HUMOUR HIM.









SUDDENLY, AVVAI UNDERSTOOD THAT THE BOY HAD MADE A PUN ON THE WORD "HOT".





# THE SOLE CONSIDERATION

AVVAI OFTEN VISITED THE COURTS OF KINGS WHERE SHE WAS WELCOMED WITH WARMTH AND HEARD WITH RESPECT.

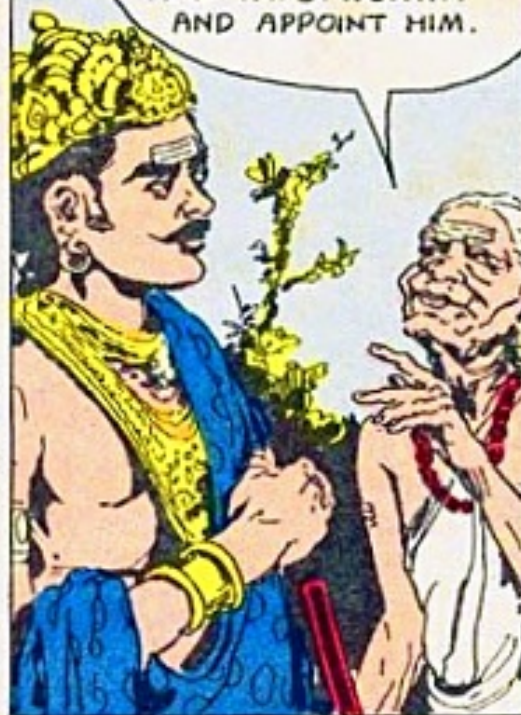




THE DISEASE WE ARE BORN WITH COULD KILL US. ON THE OTHER HAND THE HERB THAT GROWS IN THE DISTANT JUNGLE CURES US.



MERIT SHOULD BE THE SOLE CONSIDERATION IN APPOINTING A PERSON TO A POSITION OF RESPONSIBILITY. FIND OUT WHICH OF THEM IS MORE CAPABLE, JUST AND TRUSTWORTHY AND APPOINT HIM.



I AM GRATEFUL TO YOU, AVVAI. WHEN I SEEK ADVICE NO ONE SPEAKS OUT FREELY...

THAT IS ANOTHER QUALITY YOU MUST LOOK FOR IN THE MINISTER YOU APPOINT.



A WEEK LATER —

AVVAI, I HAVE APPOINTED THE NEW MINISTER...



...AND MERIT WAS THE SOLE CONSIDERATION IN MY CHOICE.

I AM HAPPY TO HEAR THAT.





# VARAPPUYARA

ONCE AVVAI WAS INVITED TO A KINGDOM WHERE AN ASSEMBLY OF POETS WAS TO BE HELD. AS USUAL, SHE WALKED ALL THE WAY THERE.



THIS SPRING, TOO, IS DRYING UP.

WILL THE DROUGHT THIS TIME MEAN THE DEATH OF US ALL?



THE CROPS ARE RUINED. WHAT SHALL WE DO FOR FOOD?



AVVAI REACHED THE PALACE AS THE POETS BEGAN TO READ OUT THEIR COMPOSITIONS.

ONE AFTER ANOTHER THEY PRAISED THE KING AND BLESSED HIM WITH A LONG LIFE AND A PROSPEROUS REIGN.

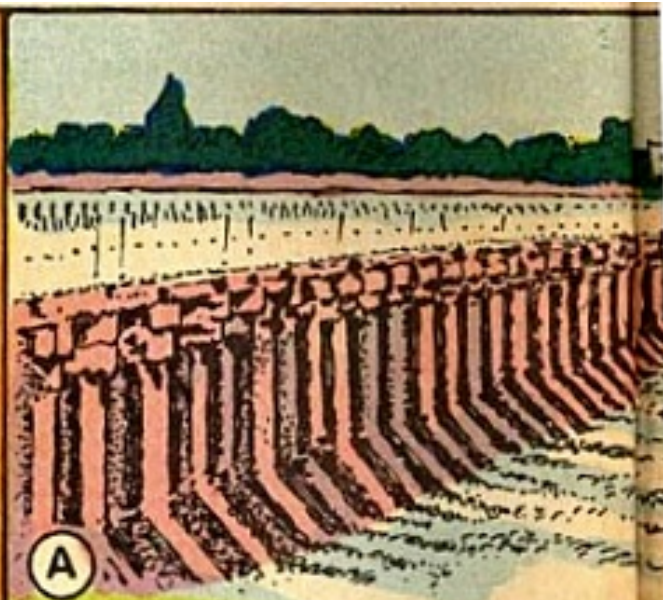






# Quiz INDIA -16

Compiled by : Swarn Khandpur  
Illustrated by : S.K. Parab



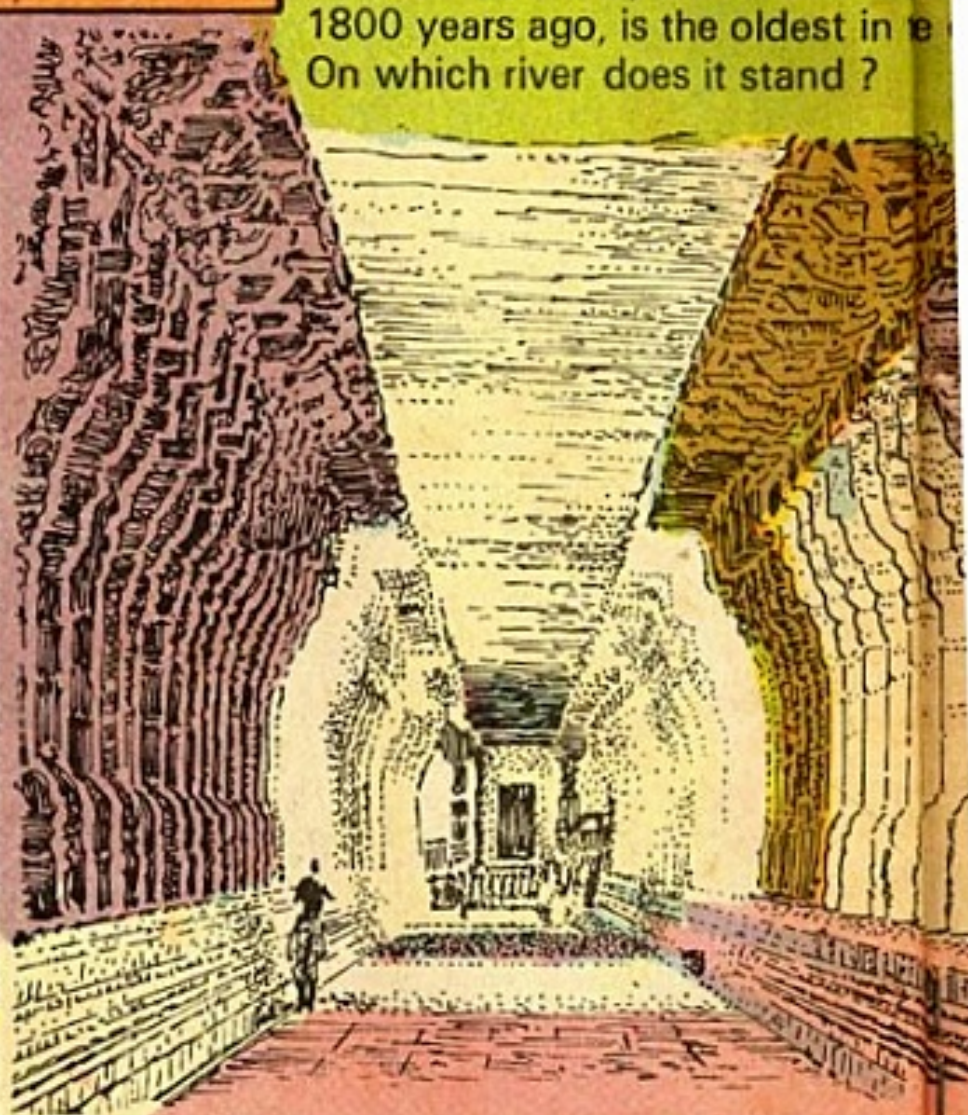
A

This dam, built by the Chola king K  
1800 years ago, is the oldest in e  
On which river does it stand ?



## DID YOU KNOW...

...that in the Hall of a Thousand  
Pillars of the Madurai Temple,  
there are carved pillars which  
when tapped produce musical  
notes ?



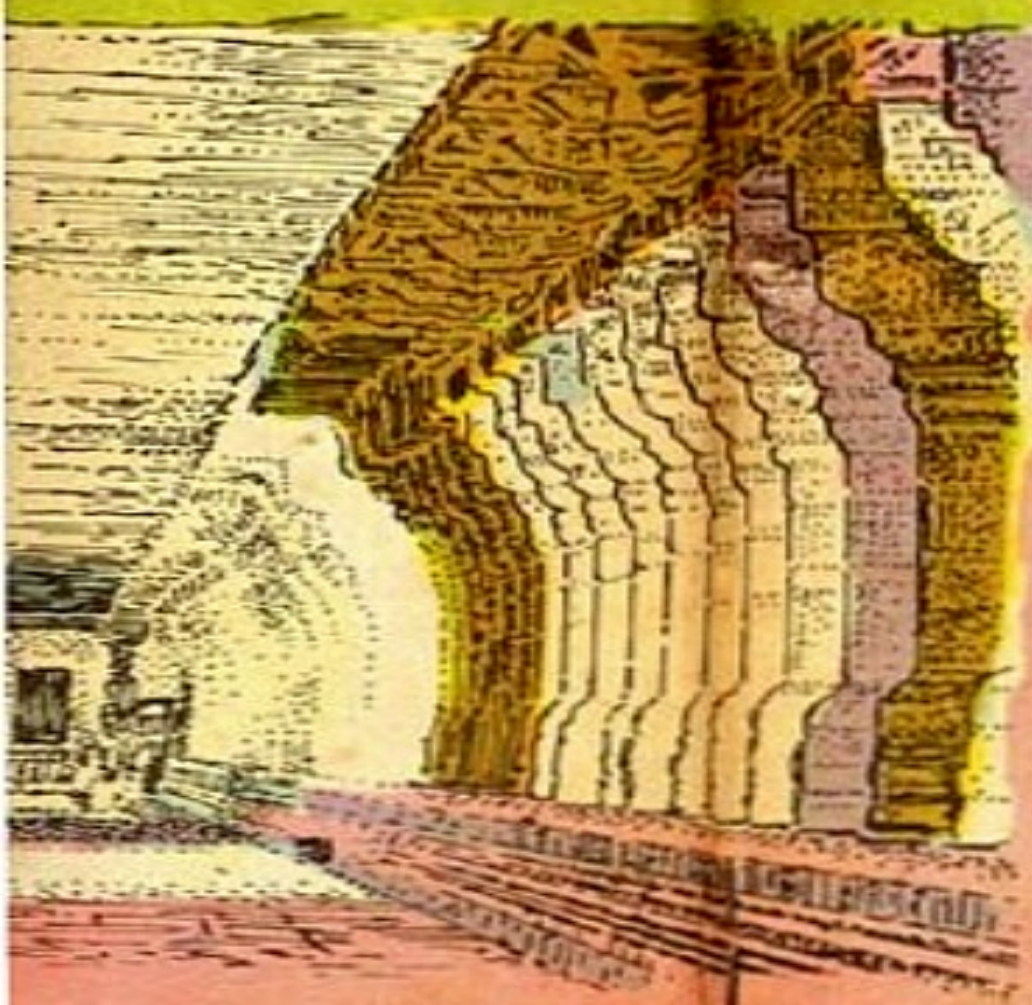
B

This 1220-metre-long temple corridor, the long  
in our country, belongs to a temple on an island  
the Palk Straits. What is the name of the temple ?





built by the Chola king Karikala,  
rs ago, is the oldest in the country.  
river does it stand ?



g temple corridor, the longest  
ngs to a temple on a island in  
at is the name of the temple?



**C** This is the tem  
where Shiva is  
Nataraja. What  
this temple ?



**D** The Tirukku  
famous Tam  
was its auth





ple in Tamil Nadu  
represented as  
is the name of



ral is a world-  
hil Classic. Who  
nor ?

#### Rules:

1. The first fifty all-correct entries will each win a prize of Rs. 10.
2. The remaining all-correct entries will each win a colourful picture post card.
3. The decision of the judges is final and binding.
4. Mail your entries, (entry form given below) to:

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Post Bag No. 16542  
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## QUIZ-16 INDIA

### ENTRY FORM

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Age : \_\_\_\_\_

Address : \_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

State : \_\_\_\_\_

Pin Code : \_\_\_\_\_

### MY ANSWERS

A \_\_\_\_\_

B \_\_\_\_\_

C \_\_\_\_\_


D \_\_\_\_\_

The last date for receiving  
entries : 14.2.85



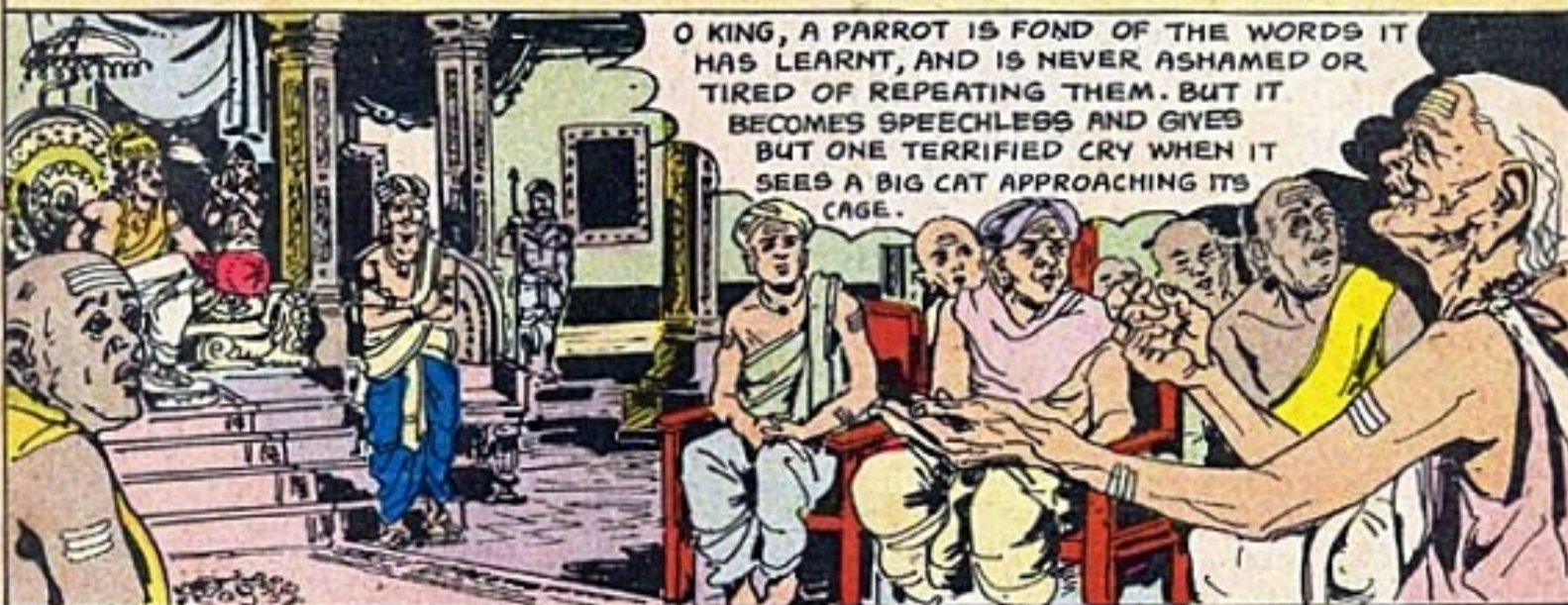


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FINALLY, AVVAI ROSE TO HER FEET. EVERYONE WAITED EAGERLY TO HEAR HER COMPOSITION.





BUT THE KING KNEW THERE WAS MORE TO IT THAN THAT.

AVVAI, I WOULD BE GRATEFUL IF YOU EXPLAINED YOUR POEM TO US.

O KING, I AM A POET; WORDS COME EASILY TO ME. BUT EVEN I AM STRUCK DUMB WHEN I SEE THE HORRORS OF DROUGHT AND FAMINE IN YOUR LAND.

BY VARAPPUYARA, I MAKE MY REQUEST THAT YOU RAISE BUNDS IN YOUR LAND. THESE BUNDS WILL INCREASE THE LEVEL OF THE WATER. MORE WATER WILL ENABLE YOU TO IRRIGATE YOUR LAND BETTER AND YOUR PEOPLE WILL PROSPER.

THE KING WAS VERY PLEASED.

AVVAI, YOU HAVE SPOKEN LIKE THE GREAT POET AND HUMANITARIAN THAT YOU ARE.

THEREAFTER, THE POETS AND MINISTERS ALL LEFT.

THE KING WHO TILL THEN HAD BEEN SO ENTHUSIASTIC, SUDDENLY HAD SECOND THOUGHTS.

HMM... BUNDS! BUNDS EVERYWHERE WILL DEplete OUR ROYAL TREASURY.

O KING, WHAT YOU SAY REMINDS ME OF ANOTHER VERSE.







# AVVAI TO THE RESCUE

ONE DAY, AS AVVAI WAS PASSING THROUGH A VILLAGE —

KICK HIM!

THRASH HIM!

KEEP OUT OF OUR STREET, YOU FILTHY URCHIN!



I'M GOING... PLEASE... DON'T HURT ME.

THEN GO AT ONCE! OR I'LL...



STOP!



LEAVE THE CHILD ALONE! CRUEL, HEARTLESS MEN! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

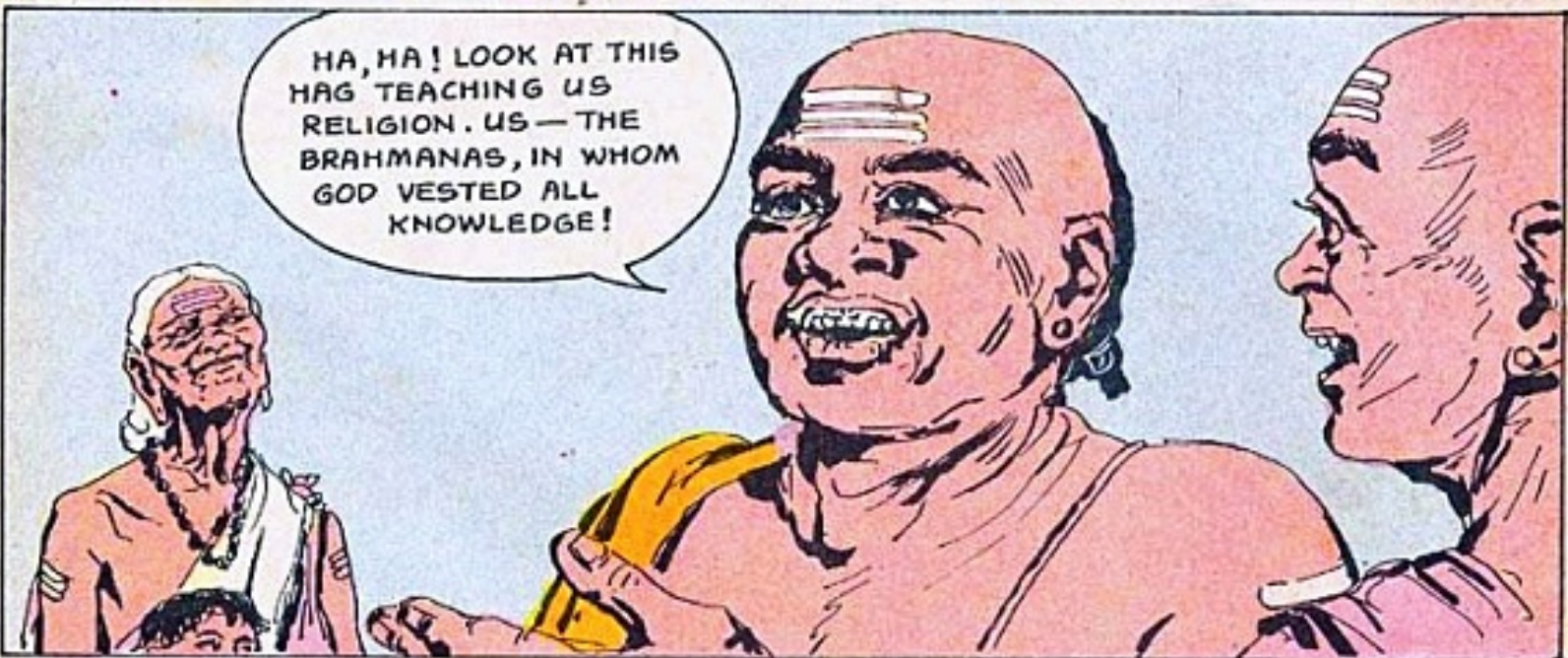
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE, OLD WOMAN? WE ARE KEEPING OUR STREET CLEAR OF POLLUTION. WHO ARE YOU TO STOP US?



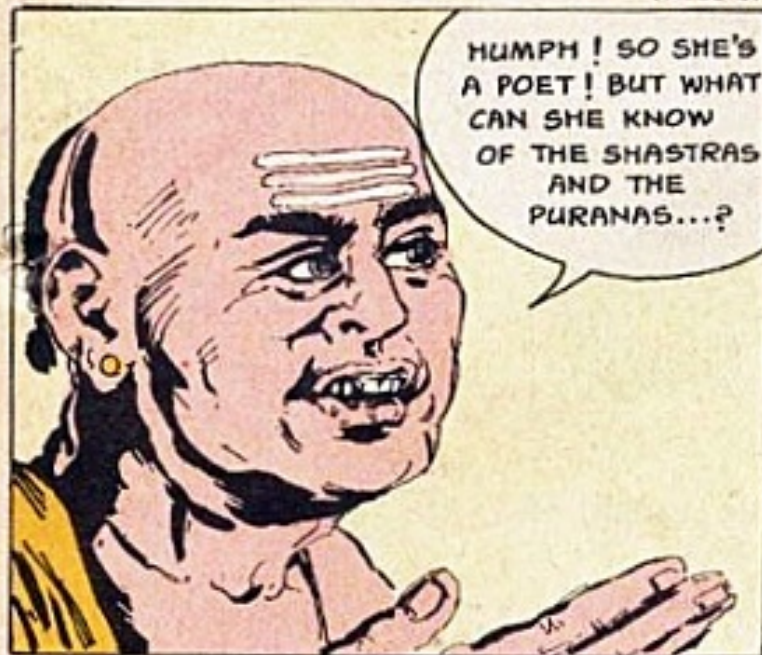










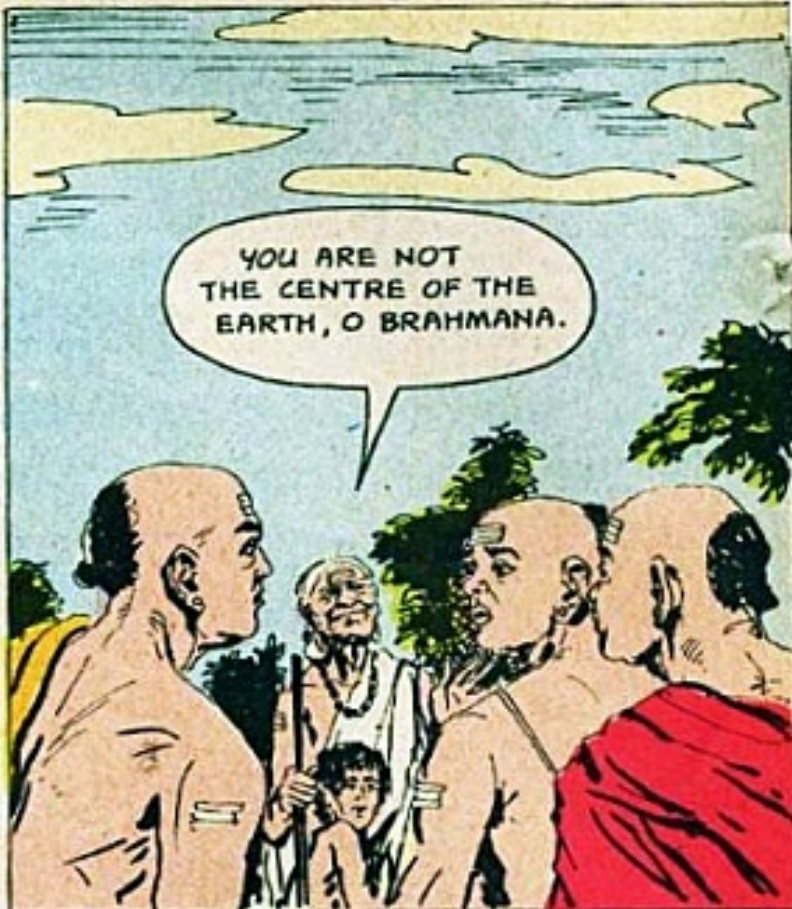




LET NO ONE THEREFORE  
BOAST OF KNOWING THIS OR  
THAT... EVERY CREATURE  
ON THIS EARTH EXCELS  
IN SOMETHING.



YOU ARE NOT  
THE CENTRE OF THE  
EARTH, O BRAHMANA.



THE BRAHMANA LOOKED AS IF HE WOULD  
EXPLODE, THEN SLOWLY...

...HIS EYES FELL...



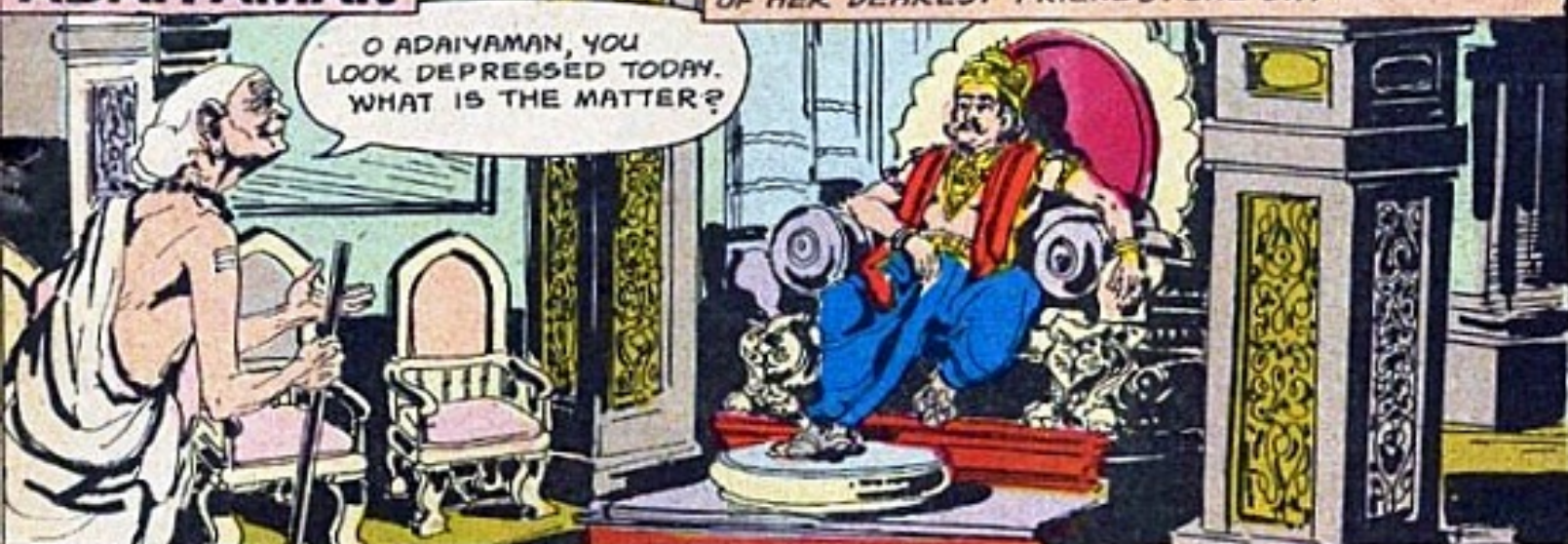
...AND FOLLOWED BY THE OTHERS HE  
QUIETLY LEFT THE SCENE.





# AVVAI AND ADAIYAMAN

AVVAI OFTEN SPENT TIME IN THE KINGDOM OF THE MIGHTY KING ADAIYAMAN, WHOM SHE HELD AS ONE OF HER DEAREST FRIENDS. ONE DAY —



O ADAIYAMAN, YOU LOOK DEPRESSED TODAY. WHAT IS THE MATTER?



AVVAI, THE NEIGHBOURING KING, THONDAIMAN, HAS CHALLENGED ME TO BATTLE. OH, WHAT A WASTE IS WAR; OF LIVES ... OF ENERGY ... OF RESOURCES.

I MUST DO SOMETHING ABOUT THIS.

AVVAI IMMEDIATELY MADE FOR THONDAIMAN'S KINGDOM...



... WHERE SHE WAS RECEIVED CORDIALLY.

AVVAI, I AM GLAD TO SEE YOU. I AM ON MY WAY TO THE ARMOURY. COME WITH ME.



AND AT THE ARMOURY, THONDAIMAN PROUDLY SHOWED AVVAI HIS ARRAY OF WEAPONS.



AT ONCE, HE UNDERSTOOD THE IMPLICATION OF THE WORDS OF THE POET.









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